

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 OPIC-03 /075 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1818
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: DIET INTERPELLATIONS

SUMMARY: EXCEPT FOR LOUD COMMUNIST CRITICISM OF US-JAPAN DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP, TWO DAYS OF PLENARY DIET QUESTIONING OF PRIMIN HAVE CENTERED ON FUKUDA GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES AND HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY NON-CONTENTIOUS. FUKUDA HAS CALMLY FIELDDED ALMOST ALL QUESTIONS BY HIMSELF, SHOWING GOOD COMPOSURE AND COMMAND OF FACTS. END SUMMARY.

1. QUESTIONING OF PRIMIN BY OPPOSITION SPOKESMEN, NOW NEAR END OF SECOND DAY, HAS BEEN GENERALLY CALM AND NON-CONTENTIOUS. BULK OF QUESTIONS IN UPPER AND LOWER HOUSE PLENARIES FROM JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY (JSP), CLEAM GOVERNMENT PARTY (CGP) AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST PARTY (DSP) HAVE BEEN ON GOJ'S PLANS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY. THEY EXPRESSED PREDICTABLE CONCERN OVER ADEQUACY OF GOJ'S PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY, PRICE STABILITY, HOUSING AND PENSIONS AND HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT BOTH HIGHER TAXES AND INFLATION-FUELING DEFICIT BUDGET.

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2. ALMOST ALL CONTENTIOUS AND US-RELATED QUESTIONS HAVE COME FROM COMMUNISTS (JCP). IN UPPER HOUSE PLENARY OF OCT 7, JCP FEMALE INTERPELLATOR, SUMIKO TANAKA, CRITICIZED GOJ FOR NOT DECIDING TO CONDUCT ITS OWN PROBE OF CRASH OF AMERICAN F-4 IN YOKOHAMA ON SEPTEMBER 27. IN TYPICAL JCP LANGUAGE, SHE SAID

WARLIKE POSTURE OF US IN JAPAN WOULD CONTINUE, AS WOULD
US PRESSURE ON JAPAN TO RE-ARM, UNTIL US-JAPAN MST
WAS ABOLISHED. IN LINE TOUCHED ON BRIEFLY BY JSP, SHE
DEMANDED JDA'S PLANS TO BUY LOCKHEED P3-C ASW PLANES
BE DROPPED BECAUSE OF LOCKHEED'S CORRUPT ACTIVITIES IN
JAPAN.

3. COMMENT: PRIMIN FUKUDA'S REPLIES HAVE BEEN
EXTEMPORANEOUS, RELAXED AND LOW KEY. AS IN HIS FIRST
APPEARANCE IN INTERPELLATIONS AS PRIMIN EARLIER IN
YEAR, FUKUDA HAS CARRIED ALMOST ENTIRE BURDEN OF
REPLIES, CALLING ON CABINET MINISTERS ONLY FOR BRIEF,
DETAIL-SUPPLYING APPEARANCES IN PROCEEDINGS WHICH HAVE
BEEN TELEVISED NATIONWIDE. DIET QUESTIONS IN PLENARY
SESSION WILL END AT NOON ON OCT 8 AND BUDGET COMMITTEE
QUESTIONING WILL BEGIN ON OCT 11. EVEN IF QUESTION-
ING IN COMMITTEE IS ROUGHER THAN IN PLENARY, PRIMIN
SEEMS LIKELY TO MAINTAIN CALM, BALANCED POSTURE IN
REPLIES, THUS MAKING POINTS WITH PUBLIC.
MANSFIELD

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